

# WASHINGTON PROTECTION & ADVOCACY SYSTEM

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April 30, 2007

Hon. Ronald R. Carpenter  
Clerk of the Supreme Court  
Washington State Supreme Court  
P.O. Box 40929  
Olympia, WA 98504-0929

CLERK

RECEIVED  
SUPREME COURT  
STATE OF WASHINGTON  
07 MAY -3 AM 8:24  
BY RONALD R. CARPENTER

RE: Support for Proposed General Rule (GR) 33

Dear Mr. Carpenter:

The Washington Protection and Advocacy System urges the Washington State Supreme Court to adopt Proposed General Rule 33. This rule creates a uniform process by which individuals with disabilities can obtain accommodations to ensure access to justice in Washington State.

As the state designated, federally-mandated protection and advocacy system for Washington state, our agency is frequently contacted by people with disabilities, attorneys, advocates, and others requesting assistance in dealing with problems in obtaining accommodations needed to participate in court or to use court services. Typically, there is confusion about how to request accommodations. This rule will ensure that the path to obtaining the auxiliary aids and services or other accommodations is clearly set out throughout the state. The result should be improved access to justice for people with disabilities, and enhanced efficiency for courts.

The adoption of this rule will be an important step toward compliance by our courts with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The United States Supreme Court held in *Tennessee v. Lane*, 541 U.S. 509 (2004) that the ADA applies to state courts. Other states have adopted rules similar to GR 33 to implement the requirements of the ADA, and the fundamental right to due process of law.

Washington Protection and Advocacy fully supports the adoption of Proposed General Rule 33. Thank you for this opportunity to provide this comment.

Sincerely,



Mark Stroh  
Executive Director